

Date of Hearing: June 28, 2011

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS

Paul J. Cook, Chair

SB 537 (Correa) – As Amended: June 23, 2011

SUBJECT: California Cadet Corps

SUMMARY: This bill allows expansion of the existing California Cadet Corps program. Specifically, this bill:

1. Allows warrant officers and non-commissioned officers to be appointed by the Adjutant General as commandants, or assistant commandants of students.
2. Includes warrant officers and non-commissioned officers in all the sections that currently apply to commissioned officers, i.e.:
 - a) Placing them under the same jurisdiction as commissioned officers in relation to schools;
 - b) Subjecting them to rules, regulations, grade, and rank determined by the Adjutant General;
 - c) Allowing those with prior service and honorable discharge to be appointed
 - d) Requiring a uniform as prescribed by the Adjutant General not to be inconsistent with the rules and regulations of the United States Army;
 - e) Subjecting them to duty at encampments and exercises; and
 - f) Receiving similar pay to active duty equivalent ranks.
3. Allows the Governor to appoint special project officers, commissioned and non-commissioned upon recommendation of the Adjutant General.
4. Permits the Adjutant General to adopt the rules and regulations for promotion of these positions.
5. Allows warrant officers and non-commissioned officers to be appointed by the commandant of cadets with the approval of the president, director, chief administrative officer, or principal of the institution in question.
6. Allows the Adjutant General to order these officers, commissioned and non-commissioned to temporary state active duty.
7. Allows presidents, directors, chief administrative officers, or principals of the institution in question to remove a student from the Cadet Corps for any reason deemed to be good cause.
8. Allows rifles to be purchased for marksmanship training.
9. Allows the Cadet Corps to utilize California National Guard facilities for training purposes whenever practical.

10. Alters the unit inspection period from annual to every two years or every year for those units which receive an unsatisfactory inspection.
11. Deletes the requirement that the Oakland Military Institute be a non-residential program.
12. Authorizes the Adjutant General to enter into a cooperative agreement with the Superintendent of Public Instruction, any county, city, or school governing board for the purpose of establishing a military academy. Additional programs beyond the California Cadet Corps may only be established if budget appropriations are made therefor.

EXISTING LAW:

1. Establishes in state government the Military Department, which includes, among others, the Office of the Adjutant General, the California National Guard, and the California Cadet Corps. Existing law establishes various duties for these officers and entities. Existing law generally authorizes the organization of a cadet company at each college, community college, high school, and each senior high school in this state having 100 or more students of 14 years of age or over, and authorizes the Adjutant General to appoint officers in the California Cadet Corps for duty in each school under the jurisdiction of the governing board.
2. Authorizes members of the California Cadet Corps to use California National Guard rifle ranges.
3. Authorizes any executive officer, assistant executive officer, supervisor of cadet instruction, or officer hurt in the line of duty to receive workers' compensation, as provided. Existing law creates a presumption that the average yearly earning of such individual is not less than \$2,500.
4. Authorizes the instructors of a military academy meeting specified requirements, including having 80 or more male students, to be commissioned in the California Cadet Corps, and authorizes the Adjutant General to enter into a cooperative agreement with the City of Oakland and a school district to establish an Oakland Military Institute.
5. Requires that Cadet Corps units be inspected by the Guard annually.
6. Permits the Adjutant General to establish the Oakland Military Institute.
7. Requires the Oakland Military Institute be a non-resident program.

FISCAL EFFECT: The Department of Military indicates minor additional costs associated with assisting and overseeing any additional California Cadet Corps programs. However, to the extent that new military academies are established as the bill authorizes, even though the academies would be funded by the school district or city which opts to establish them, the Military Department would likely incur additional costs for oversight. The Adjutant General's Office currently receives about \$1 million annually from the General Fund for support of military officers who work at the Oakland Military Institute; therefore, the addition of any new military academies could result in cost pressure for additional funding from the state. Recent amendments provide that a new program may only be established if funds are appropriated in the annual Budget Act or other act.

COMMENTS: The California Cadet Corps, founded in 1911, is a school-based program conducted with a military framework and provides growth and leadership opportunities for California students. The program is offered through schools and can be taken for credit. As part of their training, cadets provide assistance and support to their school and their communities. There are currently about 6,500 cadets. The Military Department provides administrative oversight and logistical support to ensure the cadets receive uniforms, supplies, equipment, and training materials.

The Cadet Corps is fully integrated as part of the existing school curriculum providing specialized academic performance, and military style training addressing problematic behavior, substandard academic performance, and other at risk factors. The program stresses six objectives: support and enhance academic achievement, provide opportunities for leadership, foster good citizenship, enhance patriotism, provide basic military knowledge, and promote health, fitness, and wellness.

According to the State of California Military Department:

1. 86% of California Cadet Corps graduates pursue higher education. About 3% join the U.S. Armed Forces.
2. California Cadet Corps cadets attend school at a rate 3.8% higher than their non-cadet counterparts.
3. Cadets experience serious disciplinary infractions significantly less often than their non-cadet counterparts.
4. Cadets earn an average of 0.54 grade points higher than their non-cadet counterparts.
5. Cadets score significantly higher on a nationally-normed assessment of leadership skills than students in grades 4-12 not enrolled in the Cadet program.
6. Cadets outperform by eight percentile points their non-cadet counterparts on the Fitnessgram, the assessment of Fitness and Wellness administered by California schools.
7. Cadets report significant gains in patriotic spirit, leadership development, and preparation for college and careers.

Section 23 of the bill changes the present inspection requirement for California Cadet Corps units from annual to every two years. Units receiving a superior or satisfactory inspection rating will not be inspected the following year. Units receiving an unsatisfactory rating will be re-inspected the following year. New units will receive an assistance visit.

The Guard raises the issue that the inspections are expensive and take money away from core program activities. Nevertheless, while costs are a valid concern, proper oversight of the program locations is critical, especially when there are marksmanship weapons and ammunition maintained at approximately 36 program locations statewide. It is vital that proper accountability be maintained. The proposed language attempts to strike a balance between the costs of annual inspections and the necessity for proper oversight.

The bill authorizes additional military academies similar to the Oakland Military institute. The stated goal of these would be, "...[to] provide a structured, disciplined environment that would be conducive to learning in a college preparatory environment. In addition to academic skills, students would develop leadership, self-esteem, and a strong sense of community." Any new California National Guard Youth Program, except for the California Cadet Corps, may only be

established if funds are appropriated for purposes of the new program in the annual Budget Act or any other act.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California Military Department - Office of the Adjutant General (source)
American Legion- Department CA
AMVETS- Department CA
California State Commanders Veterans Council

Opposition

None on file.

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